

Red-Cooked Chicken with Chestnuts Recipe

Ingredients: Serves 4

Vegetable oil, for passing through
400g boneless, skinless chicken thighs, pounded to
½-inch thickness and cut into 1-inch pieces
1 cup peeled cooked chestnuts
1 scallion, trimmed and cut in half
One ½-inch-thick slice peeled fresh ginger, smashed under a cleaver
1½ tablespoons smashed rock sugar
½ cinnamon stick, about 2 inches long
4 dried hot red peppers
1 whole star anise
3 tablespoons rice wine or dry sherry
¼ cup soy sauce
1 cup Chicken stock or canned chicken broth
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon dark sesame oil

Method:

Heat a large wok over high heat. Add enough vegetable oil to come 1½ inches up the sides of the wok and heat it to 170°C. Add the chicken pieces, one at a time so they do not splash or stick to each other, and stir gently until they turn white, about 1 minute. Add the chestnuts and fry for 20 seconds. Using a wide wire-mesh strainer, transfer the chicken and chestnuts to a colander to drain. Discard all but 2 tablespoons of the oil from the wok. Return the wok with the oil to medium-high heat. Add the scallion, ginger, rock sugar, cinnamon, dried peppers and star anise and cook reducing the heat as needed so the scallion does not burn. Return the chicken and chestnuts to the wok, add the rice wine and soy sauce and cook for 30 seconds. Add the stock and bring to a boil over high heat. Continue cooking, stirring often, until the sauce is reduced to a glossy syrup, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove and discard the peppers, cinnamon, star anise, scallion and ginger. Dissolve the cornstarch in 3 tablespoons cold water in a small bowl and stir into the wok. Add the sesame oil and simmer for 20 seconds. Serve immediately with steamed white jasmine rice.